

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 001636

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/PDA (MBUCKLEY); WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON DRUG TRAFFICKING, JULY 9, 2003

1. Editorial in Tegucigalpa-based moderate daily "El Herald" on 7/9 entitled "Narco trafficking and corruption". "Drug trafficking has a considerable corrupting power, so much that even the U.S. government has financed wars with funds coming from this illegal source, such as the fight against the Sandinistas during the 'lost decade'."

"Drug trafficking does not exclusively promote corruption within judicial institutions, public officials and politicians. It can also overturn the moral values of common and ordinary people who receive 'aid' from drug traffickers, no matter that such 'aid' comes from the demise of millions of young people victims of drugs and their tormented parents."

"Honduras still has time to avoid that the powerful tentacles of drug trafficking take advantage of the immorality and excessive ambition of a few, as well as the needs and reversed values of many. The fight against this current threat should concern all of us, without regard of social class."

2. Op-ed by Edmundo Orellana Mercado (former Attorney General in a Liberal Party administration and Law Professor in the National University) in Tegucigalpa-based liberal daily "La Tribuna" on 7/9 entitled "Narco trafficking". "For some years now, our society has been threatened by one of the most devastating problems in modern times: narco trafficking. the environment in which narco trafficking operates the best is through corruption. Consequently, those societies who are headed by leaders inclined to corruption are easy victims."

"Then, we should not be surprised that our neighbors north of Bravo River are repeatedly warning us that the failure of Honduras's efforts on the fight against drug trafficking are caused by the corruption of our leaders. The consequences of ignoring those warnings could lead to the decertification of Honduras, which could have a serious cost for the country by reducing the international cooperation for Honduras."

"We should fight against narco trafficking and corruption relentlessly, in every front, and with all resources available. Otherwise, corruption will asphyxiate us, and as a result of the decertification we will be isolated from the world and suffering its consequences by ourselves."

Palmer